

BUSY LITTLE BEES THE ROW PAGE

OUR contest of the last three months has closed and the Blue team is victorious, winning by just two stories. The Busy Bees must not feel that because the time was extended a week any injustice has been done, for all the stories used this week were in a week ago and before the expiration of the three months, so that every one of the stories were sent in within the time limit. The extension was made only because there were so many stories they could not all be used last week.

And this week also closes the reign of our king bee, Albert Goldberg of Shenandoah, Ia., captain of the Red team, and our queen bee, Gail Howard of Omaha, captain of the Blue team, and to succeed them the Busy Bees have elected Joseph Kolar of Omaha, king, and captain of the Red team, and Nora Cullen of Omaha, queen, and captain of the Blue team, for the next three months. Both our rulers are from Omaha this time, it will be noticed.

Gail Howard has written another good letter for our page this week and the editor hopes all the Busy Bees will read it.

Some of us have gotten careless again and forgotten the word limit for stories. Several good stories have had to be rejected lately because they included more than 250 words and there has also been a number of accounts of trips. We are not using the trips any more, boys and girls; only the original stories.

Of course, everybody is just now more interested in Christmas than anything else, and the Busy Bee editor is sure this best loved holiday of the whole year will afford the subject for lots of good stories, only we must all be sure they are original.

Our postcard exchange is growing every week and now includes: Alta Wilken, Waco, Neb.; Alice Temple, Lexington, Neb.; Eunice Bode, Falls City, Neb.; Jean De Long, Alinsworth, Neb.; Mildred Robertson, Manilla, Ia.; Louise Reebe, 2609 North Nineteenth avenue, Omaha; Gail Howard, 4722 Capitol avenue, Omaha; Eda Behling, York, Neb.; Estelle McDonald, Lyons, Neb.; Juanita Innes, 2749 Fort street, Omaha; Marguerite Bartholomer, Gothenburg, Neb.; Louise Hahn, David City, Neb.; Vera Cheney, Creighton, Neb.; Faye Wright, Fifth and Belle streets, Fremont, Neb.; Ruth Ashby, Fairmont, Neb.; Maurice Johnson, 1627 Locust street, Omaha; Lotta Woods, Pawnee City, Neb.; Miss Pauline Parks, York, Neb.; Louise Stiles Lyons, Neb.; Hulda Lundberg, Fremont, Neb.; Edna Enos, Stanton, Neb.; Alice Grassmeyer, 1545 C street, Lincoln, Neb.

The prize winners for this week were Joseph Kolar, aged 13 years, 1912 South Eighth street, Omaha, Neb., and Ruby Denny, aged 11 years, Casper, Wyo. Honorary mention was given to Gail E. Howard, former queen of the Busy Bees.

The Magic Snowdrops

By Helena Davis.

LITTLE BEE AND LITTLE BEN were twin sisters and brothers. And they were very, very poor. Their parents worked in a great factory that was built at the edge of a high mountain. But at the time when Bee and Ben lived the factories were called shops. There was no such thing as a factory then, although the large shops of that period were almost like the factories of today. In order that the little readers might know just what sort of a place the parents of Bee and Ben worked in I have called the "shop" a "factory."

And all day long Bee and Ben stayed at their home, a mere cabin built of logs and thatch with a mud chimney. There were no windows in the cabin, and when the door was shut to keep out the cold the place was very dark, having no light save that which was made by the little fire in the fireplace. And the little Bee and Ben were obliged to be very saving of the sticks—which they called the wood faggots—which they laid upon the fire during their parents' absence. And not only did the little Bee and Ben suffer for want of light, but they suffered miserably from the cold when the winter ones set in.

One day early in December the little pair were seated beside the open door looking out towards the great mountain that lifted its hoary head toward the clouds. Although it was very cold out of doors the children preferred the chill breath of the mountain to the closed, dark room with the firelight flickering here and there and making ugly shadows to frighten them. So they kept themselves as comfortable as they could by wrapping the bedclothes about their thin, clad forms and sat beside the open door. "The mountains are very tall," said Bee, wondering what mysteries were hidden away in their canyons and caverns. "I should like to fly like a bird and see what is on the very top."

"Ah! fairies dwell there," declared Ben, his eyes growing big and bright as he looked upward. "Fairies live in the top of the mountain."

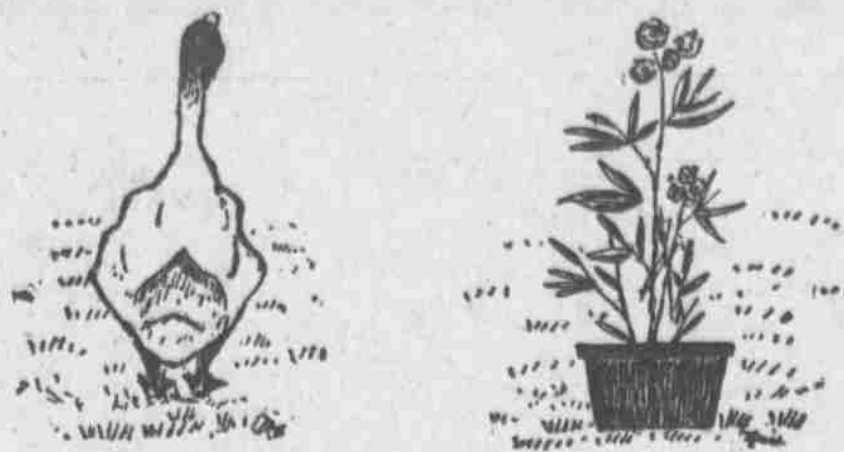
"And there live the weather makers, too," said Bee. "It is from the mountain tops that the snowflakes come. Ugh! And the little girl shivered as she thought of the cold that came with the snowflakes. "Ugh! I don't like snow, and as long as it is clear we can sit out of doors and see the mountains."

"And we may also see the roof of the shop where our father and mother work. And we may watch for father's and mother's coming as the dark creeps down," said Ben. "But when it snows we must close the door, go to the fire and crouch beside it to keep warm, and wait in the darkness for the sound of father's and mother's footsteps outside the door."

But just as they talked the clouds gathered about the great of the mountain top,



THEIR BOUND THE POINT OF HILL CAME THEIR PARENTS, WALKING SLOWLY, WITH BENT HEADS.



The Ole Gander. The Oleander.

The Gander loves to promenade
Around the farmer's poultry-yard,
While, as we see, the Oleander
Is quite unable to meander.



RULES FOR YOUNG WRITERS

1. Write plainly on one side of the paper only and number the pages.
2. Use pen and ink, not pencil.
3. Short and pointed articles will be given preference. Do not use over 250 words.
4. Original stories or letters will be used.
5. Write your name, age and address at the top of the first page.
6. First and second prizes of books will be given for the best two contributions to this page each week. Address all communications to CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT, OMAHA, NEB.

(First Prize.)

Mr. Toad

By Joseph Kolar, Aged 13 Years, 1912 South Eighth Street, Omaha, Neb. Blue.

Once there was a toad that thought himself very wise and was always telling other creatures how to behave. One hot summer day he seated himself on a toadstool and began talking to a butterfly and two stag-beetles who were nearby.

"You are no doubt very well-meaning creatures, but your manners are not good. You are always flying or running about, always on the sly."

"We are obliged to run about for our food," said one of the stag-beetles; "we feed on the sap of trees and plants." The

live upon now, and our hearts are very heavy." So explained the sorrowing mother of little Bee and little Ben, while the father entered the cabin and dropped disconsolately in his chair in the corner by the fireplace.

Bee and Ben ran and brought faggots to replenish the blaze. Then they fetched from the cupboard what food there was and placed it upon the table for their tired parents to eat. And all the while that they worked they whispered together, planning on doing something to help the dear parents who were almost overcome with discouragement. "I'll ask the fairies to come," whispered Bee. "I'll slip out as soon as the night falls and call aloud to the fairies who live on the mountain and pray them to come and assist our dear father and mother to find work."

"And I'll remain in doors and talk to our parents to keep their minds off you, for should they discover that you had left the house they would become worried, thinking that some wicked spirit had coaxed you away, and would run out and call to you. That would break the charm, and the fairies would not hear you," said Ben.

That night, as soon as it was really dark, Bee watched her opportunity to slip from the house. Soon her parents began talking over some plan by which they might find work during the winter. But though they planned, their hearts were sore afraid that their hopes would be dashed to nothing. Ben, sitting between them, engaged their attention with several questions about other discharged workers, asking what certain good neighbors would do now, that they were turned out of the shop, or from the tilled lands, and winter at hand.

Bee saw her chance and ran softly out at the half open door, taking pains to close it softly behind her. Once out of doors she turned her eyes towards the high mountain top, crying out in a soft, pleading voice:

"Come, good fairies, and help my dear father and mother. They are out of work, have no lands nor shops, nor golden corn. Come and lead us to a place where work is to be had."

Then Bee sank upon the cold ground, so overcome by emotion that she did not feel the wintry blast that struck through her garments. And as she crouched there, her eyes looking towards the top of the great mountain that loomed so darkly before her, there appeared over its top a soft white mist that crept silently down the mountain side, growing whiter and denser with every minute.

"A snowstorm!" And Bee shuddered, rising and returning to the house. "And we have nothing for breakfast, and just enough faggots for the night, with none for the morrow, and no coin with which to buy more from the hauler of wood. And no more food in the cupboard—and father and mother out of work and no prospect of finding any for some time to come!"

After Bee had crept into the house and lay herself down on her little cot in one corner of the room her parents decided to retire for the night. The father covered the fire to hold it till morning, the door was bolted and all were seen in their beds. And soon the weary father and mother slept and little Ben slept also. But on her cot little Bee lay wide awake, expecting something to happen. Toward midnight Bee felt a cold draft of wind sweep down the chimney; then she saw several large flakes of snow, soft and white, falling upon the ash-covered fire. Strange to say, these flakes did not melt. They lay where they fell for some moments, then slowly they expanded into shapes—shapes of fairies. Bee sat up and rubbed her eyes. Surely she had fallen asleep and was dreaming. But no, there they were, several pretty

to the door and found a little girl with ragged clothes and bare, cold feet. Her hands were so blue with the cold that Miss Osborne made her come in by the fire.

"Miss Osborne," began the child when she was in by the warm fire, "our neighbor said that you wanted somebody to do your washing, so I have come to see if we could get it."

Then as she looked at the rich furnishings of the room, she said: "My, but I should think you ought to be thankful, with such a beautiful house and a turkey and so many nice things to eat. We are thankful, though we've only an old rooster instead of a turkey. Mamma is going to put some vinegar on it so it won't be so tough."

When she was warm Miss Osborne let her have the washing. She also gave the little girl a turkey, sweet potatoes, cranberries and many other things that go with Thanksgiving. The girl was very grateful for these things and thanked Miss Osborne again and again.

After the child was gone Miss Osborne sat down and thought it all over again, and she decided that she did have something to be thankful for after all.

(Honorary Mention.)

An Obedient Boy

By Gail E. Howard, Aged 13 Years, 4722 Capitol Avenue, Omaha, Neb. Blue.

Once there was a boy who was working for a man that was very particular about obedience.

One day when there wasn't very much to do Mr. Brown thought he would make a test of the boy's obedience.

He said, "Edwin, go up to the attic and bring down to me a bushel of beans that you will find up there."

He went up and soon returned with the beans. Then Mr. Brown said, "Empty them on the floor." Edwin obeyed. Then he was told to pick them up one by one and count them, which Edwin did.

Of course Edwin did not know why he had been called upon to do this, but he had been taught to obey at home, and so he did what Mr. Brown asked him to.

Mr. Brown then told Edwin why he had asked him to do what he saw that he did. Edwin was very glad to have Mr. Brown say this about him, and always after this tried to live up to it.

A Happy Christmas

By Alta Wilken, Aged 13 Years, Waco, Neb. Red.

Ned was a poor boy, who had no mother to take care of him. In fact he had no friends at all. He was a crossing sweeper.

One day as he was standing at a crossing he heard some yelling. Looking around he saw what it was. He saw that some boys were pounding a dog till it was nearly dead. As he did not like to see a dumb animal treated this way, he went over and got the dog away from the boys. Just as he had rescued it and returned to the crossing a gentleman and little girl came up to where he was.

Mr. Jones, the gentleman, told Ned that it was his little girl's dog, so Ned gave it to her. Mr. Jones asked Ned where he lived. He told him that he had no home, not even a place to sleep. When Helen (as this was the little girl's name) heard this she looked up at her father and said, "Papa, don't we take this boy home and give him a home, and as tomorrow is Christmas, we will call him our Christmas present."

Her father, who was a rich man, said, "Yes, we will take him with us and give him a home."

Ned said he had never had such a pleasant Christmas.

A Queer Indian

By Hazel Day, Aged 14 Years, 3948 Franklin St., Omaha, Red.

On a western ranch about thirty years ago, a number of young men were working. One afternoon the snow began to fall. In a few days a blizzard was at its height. For several days the storm held sway. Provisions were getting low, and the men had to be very careful how they used them. They must make some way to get food or else they must all starve.

One morning the cook appeared at the

dark, Bee watched her opportunity to slip from the house. Soon her parents began talking over some plan by which they might find work during the winter. But though they planned, their hearts were sore afraid that their hopes would be dashed to nothing. Ben, sitting between them, engaged their attention with several questions about other discharged workers, asking what certain good neighbors would do now, that they were turned out of the shop, or from the tilled lands, and winter at hand.

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fairies, and one carried a little wand with a star on its point. This fairy came to Bee and said: "I shall cure a deep sleep to fall upon your parents and brother. Then you shall all be carried to a beautiful country beyond the mountain, where you shall be made rich and happy. None but you shall know of the journey till they awake in the morning."

But just as the fairy was about to wave her wand over the sleeping parents of Bee that little girl stayed the magic wand, saying, "Will you please, good fairy, take all the poor who were discharged from the shop today, too? They are as poor and unhappy as we are."

"Your wish shall be granted, little heart of gold," replied the fairy. Then she waved her wand over the sleeping man, woman and boy, causing them to slumber a hundred winged fairies, Bee, of course, being carried also, and were taken from the cold, dreary old cabin out into the night. And over the mountain they were carried as fast as the birds fly. Before dawn they were set down in a lovely house so comfortable and full of warmth and light that Bee clasped her hands with happiness. "Oh, how glorious!" she cried. And then her parents and brother awoke.

It is impossible to tell of their happy surprise, and their thankfulness to the good fairies who had brought them hither. But it took Bee and Ben some time to assure their parents that they were not dreaming, but wide awake.

And near to their home stretched great acres of rich land; and on the land were numerous pretty cottages where the tillers of the soil and the workers in the shops were to dwell. And all these belonged to the parents of Bee and Ben. And when, after a good breakfast, Bee's and Ben's father went to look over the lands and shops which were his own, what was his happy surprise to find there all his old comrades who had worked in the shop beside him and his good wife on the other side the great mountains. And in the goodness and thankfulness of his heart he made each man owner of his own cottage and several acres of rich land. And there for many, many years lived the most contented people on all the earth. And they owed their happiness to their own goodness and the magic of the fairies, the fairies who only help the good, you know, and who never do anything for the selfish and wicked.

And little Bee and little Ben were the most beloved among all those happy people and were always called "The Magic Snow Drops."

door and announced that they had eaten the last piece of bacon and the last potato for breakfast. The men stared at each other with blank faces. What can be done? One of the men stands gazing out the dingy window.

All of a sudden he turns around and says that he will go to the village for food. His chum says if he goes he will go too. The others didn't want them to go, but the two were determined.

They start that afternoon with baskets and sacks. Three days they are on the road. Three days they stand hunger and cold. But at last they reach the village in safety and after resting fill their baskets and start back. By this time the storm has stopped.

In the evening, when sitting around a fire they hear a "pit, pat, pit pat." Thinking it is Indians, they load their guns and stand ready. They are very much frightened, because two is quite a small number to ten or more. The noise gets louder and louder. It is very near. By the moonlight they can see a donkey coming toward them. You can imagine they were relieved. Catching the donkey, they load him down with baskets and sacks. When they reach the ranch, as many as have strength give three cheers for their brave fellow men.

One day he came hurrying over and said that he had found out that Mr. Smith was his cousin.

The next Thanksgiving Frank did not have to go out and hunt for a turkey, because his cousin, Mr. Morgan, was a rich man and asked them to come and live with him, because he was not married. They went to live with him after a while and were very happy.

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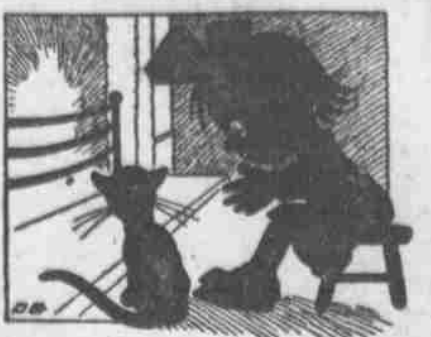
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Nonsense Jingle



By the fire Mabel sat;
Pussy sat beside her.
Mabel said, "Dear Pussy Cat!"
And Pussy answered, "Pur-pur."

Charlotte, lived on the west side of Rosenberg's. After they started Josephine said, "Let's go back and teeter-totter." As they turned back, Ruth, Marjorie and Clara came up to them. Ruth went up to Helen and struck her. Helen, who was of a fiery temper, struck back, and so on.

The twins and Helen went back to their house and across the fence a fight was commenced with all. It happened that the children were throwing clods, bricks and sticks at each other and Charlotte hit Clara on the side of the head. Instantly Clara began to cry. Then the three girls ran as hard as they could up to Helen's house, which was about three blocks away.

They were on the bridge by the house when the twins heard their hired girl calling to Charlotte. Charlotte then ran out in the playhouse by the barn, when some one "phoned up" and they had to go. "Will you go with us, Helen?" asked Josephine. "Well, I guess so," Helen answered. So they went around another way and crept in their house. They happened to look out the window and saw the children with Mrs. Rosenberg standing there. Clara had a bump on her head as big as an egg.

The girls, anyway Charlotte, have never done that again.

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